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The Bureau of Land Management Service Center Newsletter December 1992

CENTER SCENE

BUILDING BRIDGES

Roger Molinar was recently approved by the Bureau Director to participate on an Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) assignment to National Image, Inc. As a national organization representing the Hispanic community, Image is directly involved with several initiatives that have human resources implications for the Bureau/Department, including employment, education, and the identification of equitable opportunities for attaining a diversified workforce in the future. Roger's detail will be of mutual benefit to both organizations.

Roger, a Colorado native, was born in Saguache—a small town in the San Luis Valley. He started working for BLM in 1972 as a cooperative education student from the University of Colorado-Boulder. Upon graduation, Roger launched his 20-year Federal career with BLM at the Denver Service Center. He has held various positions, including Sociologist, Management Analyst, Records Administrator, Records Section Chief, and Chief, Branch of Records, Directives, and Library Management. Roger's analytical abilities, knowledge of project management methodology, records management/administration expertise, and previous managerial experience have helped him to develop a positive reputation for himself, as well as for the Bureau.

Over the years Roger has developed friendships with a variety of Bureau managers, supervisors, and employees. He would like to convey his regrets for not saying farewell to all his BLM friends and coworkers prior to his departure in October. He does, however, look forward to seeing them and hearing from them in the future. Roger's office is located near downtown Denver, and he can be reached at (303) 534-6534.

AMERICAN INDIAN OBSERVANCE

The Service Center employees participated in an American Indian on November 10, 1992. Last March, President Bush signed a proclamation, the first of its kind, designating 1992 as the Year of the American Indian.

Gene Poor Bear, a community leader and education consultant and counselor for the Drug and Alcohol Patient Program at the Eagle Lodge in Denver, opened the program. According to Mr. Poor Bear, who is a member of the Oglala (Sioux) tribe and originally from the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, two of the most destructive things to the Native American culture today are alcohol and jealousy. He added that society is losing touch with its younger generation—losing them to alcohol, drugs, and street gangs. The Native Americans feel, as do many other cultures, that "the family structure is where it begins." Mr. Poor Bear said that 15 to 20 years ago many of his people were very ashamed of who they were. Thankfully, he said, that is changing in the 1990's. "We are not a selfish people. You people are never forgotten. We pray for all people."

The program also included Charles Cambridge, past professor from CU-Boulder and Tri-Executive for Kimochi, Inc., who spoke about theories of origin, perceptions, and treatment of Native Americans. His talk was followed by children from the Circle of Learning Day Care singing and dancing to Native American music. The observance concluded with a luncheon featuring Indian tacos prepared by the Denver Indian Center.

Children from the Circle of Learning Day Care prepare to do a dance as part of the American Indian observance.

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HELPING TO SHAPE ALMRS

Many people, representing a variety of backgrounds and a remarkable diversity of experience, have helped to shape the ALMRS concept over the years. One such person is Fil Jimenez.

Fil was recently reassigned from the Colorado State Office to the ALMRS/Modernization Project, bringing with him a wide array of experiences. He began his 32-year Federal government career in 1959 when he went to work as a Cartographic Draftsman (Technician) in BLM's Phoenix Land Office. In 1961, he was tapped for the Bureau's Records Improvement Project and moved to Billings, where he became a Land Law Examiner. A year and a half later, Fil left the Federal government and moved to Colorado to work for Jefferson County as a civil engineering draftsman.

In the summer of 1963, Fil went to work with the Denver Regional Office of the Forest Service as a Cartographic Technician. His mapping and drafting duties including preparing base maps, Job Corps campsite plans, and a variety of brochures.

Fil returned to BLM in 1966 as a draftsman, but soon became a Public Room Assistant. Working in a Public Room from 1968 through 1972, Fil learned a lot about the Bureau's various programs in the "best learning platform there is for learning about lands and records."

Perhaps Fil's most interesting assignment came in 1972 when he became a Public Information Specialist and started presenting Environmental Awareness Workshops. Fil worked hand-in-hand with the National Park Service, the Forest Service, and the Colorado Department of Education. Outdoor settings were used to give school teachers, energy company employees, and others hands-on training. Tree borings, soil samples, and water quality analyses were used as a springboard for discussion of environmental issues.

One especially rewarding project involved honoring some of the original Colorado homesteaders as part of the Nation's Bicentennial and Colorado's Centennial. Several Colorado State Office employees dressed up in rented 1800's period costumes and put on an open house. The oldest living homesteader and numerous runners-up were given certificates recognizing their contributions to the history of the state.

Fil was Colorado's ALMRS coordinator for several years and then served as Chief of the Land Records Section before coming to the Service Center on a detail as part of the user acceptance team for the ALMRS prototype. As part of the team, Fil's job was to ensure that the prototype and ultimate ALMRS system would meet people's day-to-day needs as they entered and retrieved data. It's been a challenging task. "We've been collecting data across the Bureau for over 10 years in different formats, files, and systems," notes Fil, "and now we need to pull all of this data together into one overall ALMRS system."

Fil has two goals in mind for ALMRS. One is to ensure that BLMers are able to use ALMRS to make land status determinations (who owns and administers a particular parcel of land, what restrictions apply, what U.S. rights exist, and what uses are authorized). The other is to provide workable tools for case processing — things like easy-to-use data entry screens and pop-up windows that are specific to whatever land and mineral actions are being processed.

Fil and his wife Bette have been Lakewood residents for 30 years. They have two children—Greg, who holds a geophysics degree from the Colorado School of Mines and is a Lieutenant in the Navy, and Michelle, who has a marketing degree from CU. Bette works for the Bureau of Reclamation, teaches private piano lessons, and is active in Jefferson County school activities.

ALMRS: THE SAGA CONTINUES

The Automated Land and Mineral Record System (ALMRS) concept has been around for many years and has been the focus of a great deal of attention, particularly at the Service Center. However, except for those who work with it on a day-to-day basis, most of us know little or nothing about ALMRS—where it's been and where it's going.

First, let's review a little history. ALMRS started out many years ago as a system to automate land and mineral records. Before long, as people began to recognize the benefits of automating *all* of the Bureau's records, the concept grew to incorporate all sorts of administrative records and resource data (wildlife habitat, water quality, etc.).

A couple of years ago, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) asked BLM to back off a bit and simply try implementing the original, limited ALMRS concept before getting in too deep. This resulted in the decision to develop a *prototype* ALMRS over an 18-month timeframe.

Accepting the challenge to "show us what you can do" using off-the-shelf technology, BLM set out to design a working prototype, using real data from a 120-township area in northwest New Mexico. The prototype itself wasn't ever intended to be a fully functional or operational system.

BLM contracted with Battelle Northwest Pacific Laboratories out of Richland, Washington, to set everything up and get all of the various components working together smoothly, including all of the coding and installation work. The prototype used a UNIX-based workstation, a Relational Data Base Management System (RDBMS), and a Geographic Information System (GIS) package.

After a lot of hard work by a lot of people, the prototype was demonstrated in July of this year in Washington, DC to OMB, Department of the Interior, and BLM people, as well as to other agencies and Congressional staff. And it was a rousing success!

The prototype clearly demonstrated that BLM had overcome some significant technical hurdles. It showed that BLM could illustrate BLM records and

The Saga continues

The Saga continued . . .

case processing requirements in an integrated fashion and make effective use of graphics...that the technology could work and BLM could make it work.

So, what's next? You guessed it...another acronym. This time it's IOC, which stands for Initial Operating Capability. Think of IOC as a sort of ALMRS Version 1.0, as something more than the initial prototype but less than the system that ALMRS will ultimately be.

The IOC effort will involve preparing a set of software requirements specifications for the eventual ALMRS/Modernization contractor in order to get the initial ALMRS system up and running in selected pilot-site locations before deployment to the rest of BLM. To do this, SC staff and selected BLM field user representatives are building on the concepts developed and lessons learned during the prototype effort.

The IOC requirements development phase is scheduled for completion in December of 1993. The watchwords now are phased implementation — taking things one step at a time.

NEW PROJECT MANAGER

There is another new face on the ALMRS/Modernization Project Staff—Daryl Koncer is the new Project Manager for the Administrative Systems Rehost.

The Administrative Systems Rehost team meets regularly. The team includes Corrine Rhodes, Project Manager Daryl Koncer, Linda Oliver, Melanie Rhinehart, and Bob Seeley. SIP II and data base representatives are also part of the team, but were not present at this session.

Daryl has held a variety of computer positions throughout his career, including Computer Specialist, Management Analyst, Equipment Support Analyst, and Systems Analyst. He has worked both in the private sector and for the Government, including for Medicare and the Social Security Administration (SSA).

For 5 years while with the SSA, Daryl was in charge of implementing a new nationwide minicomputer system that produced Beneficiary Notices. These minicomputers were distributed to six processing centers throughout the country. Daryl was responsible for the budget planning process, Request For Proposal (RFP) requirements, field site preparation, implementation, acceptance testing, training manuals, on-site training, and hardware/support liaison for the processing centers.

As Project Manager, Daryl is responsible for the administrative systems being rehosted by the ALMRS/Modernization contractor and installed on the hardware/software platform. He will be providing a package to the ALMRS/Modernization contractor that includes an assembly of system documentation, software, task orders, and testing of all contractor products.

Before the inception of this project, BLM administrative systems were put through a Software Improvement Process (SIP I). Basically, programs were converted to Software Engineering Technology (SET) standards to make ALMRS/Modernization contractor tasks easier for conversion. SIP II systems used ASPEN II and DM IV (Honeywell data base system) requiring more extensive effort by the ALMRS/Modernization contractor. For SIP II, BLM is producing system requirements specifications and interface requirements specifications. The ALMRS/Modernization contractor will write new software with the same functionality of the old systems with possibly a new data base platform.

Daryl has put together a team that is responsible for establishing procedures to ensure that program documentation and software components are complete for turnover to the ALMRS/Modernization contractor. This group will identify tasks and specific requirements for the ALMRS/Modernization contractor. They will also develop work package procedures and change control procedures, and determine system priority sequence, testing procedures, system certification procedures, etc. In addition, the group will determine quality reviews of contractor deliverable products, skills needed (user representatives/programmers), and workpower required for these quality reviews.

WORKING WITH WILDLIFE

Theodore Zeisig, an employee in the Hardware, Software and Telecommunication Section (SC-312), has an interest in wildlife conservation issues and has been involved in several conservation activities. Theo shares some of his knowledge and experiences in this month's issue.

Burrowing Owls and Prairie Dogs

While living in Albuquerque, I helped two wildlife organizations, HawkWatch International and Prairie Dog Pals, to relocate burrowing owls and prairie dogs from a 40-acre construction site. Burrowing owls are largely dependent on prairie dogs to provide suitable nesting burrows.

Drawing by LisaBeth Daly, HawkWatch International

There were seven nesting pairs of owls at the site. Four of the owl pairs were captured and released into artificial burrows constructed at a relocation site. One pair had eight nestlings and was relocated as a family unit. Two other pairs did not fare as well. The female of one pair was found dead in the nest burrow, possibly killed by a predator; the male apparently had left the area. The male of the other pair had an infected wound and later died; the female escaped. The last pair, whose burrow was located outside of the immediate construction area, was left at the construction site and fledged four young.

Seventeen eggs were excavated from three burrows and were incubated, but only four hatched. One owlet died within 48 hours. The remaining three owlets were raised by Wildlife Rescue and later released. A captive adult burrowing owl, which had been hit by a car and permanently disabled, was used as a surrogate parent.

A nest burrow has to be excavated immediately after the male and female owls are captured so the eggs or young can be kept warm. Excavating a burrow is a delicate operation. One first reaches into the burrow feeling for eggs or young. The burrow is excavated up to this point. This process is repeated as many times as necessary until the eggs or young are reached. One has to be very careful to avoid causing a cave-in of the nest chamber.

When disturbed, burrowing owl nestlings can imitate the hissing and rattling of a rattlesnake to deter predators. It requires a substantial amount of resolve to put your arm into a burrow that sounds like it is occupied by a rattlesnake.

Despite their name, burrowing owls rarely dig their own burrows; instead they improve existing prairie dog burrows. Approximately 150 prairie dogs were captured at the construction site and moved to the owl relocation site. The following spring the new prairie dog colony had approximately 40 active burrows and young prairie dogs were observed. Two pairs of burrowing owls were sighted at the new colony that spring.

Research studies have estimated that adult burrowing owl densities are approximately 1,000 times greater in active prairie dog colonies than in areas a mile or more away from active colonies. Prairie dog colonies also create suitable habitat for many other wildlife species, such as lizards, snakes, and rabbits. Prairie dogs can be an important food source for predators, such as raptors, coyotes, foxes, and badgers. The endangered black footed ferret was apparently highly dependent on prairie dogs. The widespread extermination of prairie dog colonies may well have been the major factor in reducing ferret numbers to near extinction.

Black Bears

My interest in the scientific aspects of black bear management was sparked by a controversial ballot issue in this last election. Colorado voters approved changes to Colorado hunting laws by a 70 percent to 30 percent margin to eliminate the spring bear hunt and the use of bait and dogs.

The main threat to bear populations and most other wildlife populations is habitat loss. While black bears appear to be somewhat adaptable to human development, loss of critical habitat, such as fall feeding areas, can severely impact bear populations. In addition, as development continues to encroach upon bear habitat, there will likely be an increase in bear-human encounters, probably to the detriment of the bears.

Poaching also poses a significant threat to black bear numbers. The black market demand for bear body parts for use as medicinal remedies, and the high price paid for this contraband, has resulted in increased illegal harvesting of black bears.

Black bears have relatively low reproductive rates; roughly two cubs are born every other year. If greatly reduced due to poaching, overharvesting, or food failures, a bear population would require a long recovery period.

The Colorado Division of Wildlife has produced a brochure, called Living With Wildlife—In Bear Country, which contains numerous facts about black bears and several suggestions on what to do if you meet a black bear. Keep in mind that very few black bear encounters end up with the bear attacking. If you should encounter a black bear, stop, stay calm, and try not to show fear; back away slowly while facing the bear; speak softly to make the bear aware of your presence; avoid direct eye contact; and do not run or make sudden movements. If you're on a trail, step off on the downhill side, give the bear room to escape, and if a cub is nearby, move away from it and look for other cubs. If attacked, fight back with anything available.

Boulder Mountain Park rangers suggest you also talk or sing while hiking so you do not surprise a bear. This gives the bear a chance to avoid you. Black bears may bluff charge to within a few feet. These are defensive charges and seldom end in an actual attack. Hiking with an unleashed dog can cause unexpected problems. The dog can run up to a bear, and then in retreating, bring the bear back to you. Taking these precautions can increase your safety and may also save a bear's life.

PERSONNEL REORGANIZES

The Division of Personnel was recently reorganized! The reorganization, along with some "rightsizing" operations and the separation of the Colorado State Office, has

Division of Personnel Staff, from left, Al Salo, Darlene Robitaille, Richard Pixton, and Acting Personnel Officer Linda Sedbrook.

resulted in a number of changes to the Division. Personnel is led by Acting Personnel Officer Linda Sedbrook and her immediate staff, which consists of two Personnel Management Specialists, who are involved in Bureauwide programs, and a Secretary. The Division now consists of three branches: Branch of Classification and Staffing; Branch of Labor and Employee Relations; and Branch of Employee and Organizational Development.

Branch of Classification & Staffing

Robert Walton is the Chief of the Branch of Classification and Staffing. His branch is primarily responsible for the classification and staffing functions within the Service Center.

Position Classification Specialists determine the title, occupational series, and grade of positions. In addition, they are responsible for implementing new classification standards issued by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), conducting annual classification reviews, and providing position management advice and assistance to managers and supervisors.

Branch of Classification and Staffing, from left, Mark Whitesell, Pat Garcia, Debbie Kolen, Johnnye Toney, Nellie Werito, Branch Chief Bob Walton, Lynne Price, and Susan Clerkin. Not pictured: Esther Erickson, Rhonda White.

Staffing Specialists are responsible for recruiting and filling positions within the Service Center. They consult with managers on how to fill positions, issue vacancy announcements, perform qualification analysis, and issue applicant rosters for positions. In addition, they are responsible for special programs such as Stay-in-School, Cooperative Education, and Veterans' Readjustment Appointments.

Branch of Labor & Employee Relations

Phyllis O'Neill is the Chief of the Branch of Labor and Employee Relations. Her branch is responsible for providing advice and guidance to managers, supervisors, and employees on employee and labor management relations issues. In addition, this branch is responsible for the following program areas:

- Ethics
- Performance Mgt.
- Incentive Awards
- Life Insurance
- Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB)
- Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)
- Retirement
- Pay
- Leave

Branch of Labor & Employee Relations from left, Judy Schnittker, Mary Haugland, Branch Chief Phyllis O'Neill, and Siobhan Gibson. Not pictured: Sue Jamiel, Denise Pettersen.

Branch of Employee & Organizational Development

The Branch of Employee and Organizational Development is headed by Gordon Jennings and includes the Service Center Training Officer, William Moody. This branch is primarily responsible for administering the Service Center training program, which includes identifying organizational and employee training needs, administering employee and supervisory development training programs, notifying the organization of future training courses, processing training nomination forms, and evaluating the effectiveness of training courses.

Branch of Employee & Organizational Development, from left, SC Training Officer William Moody, Branch Chief Gordon Jennings, and Maria Martinez.

The Branch staff annually provides Bureauwide management development seminars, including the Management and Leadership Workshop, which is given twice a year to high potential prospective managers, and the Advanced Leadership Workshop, which is given once a year to current managers at the GM-13, 14, and 15 levels. The Branch staff also provides organizational development services to the Service Center, consisting of activities such as transition management, conflict resolution, communication improvement, and team building.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM COURSE

The holiday season is a happy time, but it can also be a stressful time. The following training course will be available from the Department of Health & Human Services for anyone who wishes to attend:

"Handling the Holidays"
December 14, 1992
1:00 - 2:00 p.m.
Building 85 Auditorium

If you would like to attend, please make arrangements with your supervisor. For additional information, please contact Douglas Mahy at (214) 767-3577.

SALO MOVES WEST

Al Salo, a Personnel Management Specialist, has relocated to the Service Center as part of the Bureau's "rightsizing" efforts.

Al was born on a farm in northern Minnesota. He graduated from Grand Rapids High School in 1954, and from Itasca Junior College with an associate of arts degree in 1956. Al interrupted his higher education at that time by entering the Naval Cadet Program in Pensacola, Florida. Upon discharge, he held several jobs, including Postal Clerk, prior to returning to college. In 1965, he graduated from the College of Education at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis with a bachelor of science degree.

After teaching elementary school in northern Minnesota for 2 years, Al entered Federal service as a teacher at the Tamarack Job Corps Center. After 2 years, he accepted a reassignment to Mountain Home Job Corps Center in Idaho, which was managed by BLM. In 1969, the Job Corps Center was closed and he lost his job through a reduction in force. At that time, Al applied for a position as Education Specialist at the Naval Training Center (NTC), Great Lakes, Illinois. Though the position was filled by someone else, he was offered an opportunity to enter the Navy's Civilian Personnel Training Program at NTC. Upon completion of training, Al applied and was selected for a Personnel Management Specialist position with the Navy's Office of Civilian Manpower Management (OCMM) in Washington, DC.

Since then, Al has held various personnel positions, including Personnel Officer, Naval Station, Adak, Alaska. He joined BLM in 1980 as a Position Classification Specialist in the Alaska State Office. He has also held the Personnel Officer position in BLM Oregon and various personnel policy and operational positions in Washington, DC. Prior to "rightsizing" to Denver, he was Acting Chief, Branch of Personnel Resources in Washington.

Some of Al's accomplishments with the Bureau include policy development for the Wellness Program and the Flexible Work Schedule. In his current position, he is revising BLM Manuals in the areas of classification, position management, and the merit promotion plan. He also has Bureau responsibilities for examining and rendering classification appeal decisions, as well as performing various personnel studies and reports.

Al and his wife Sandra have been married for 33 years. They have two daughters and five grandchildren. Al enjoys fishing, hunting, camping, woodworking, and stone carving.

ELDERCARE LOCATOR

The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging recently announced the availability of the Eldercare Locator, a toll-free telephone service for information about community services for older people anywhere in the United States. The Eldercare Locator can identify the most appropriate information source for senior services anywhere in the country, including services such as legal assistance, protective services, nursing homes, and entitlement of benefit issues. An Information Specialist refers callers to local information and referral services based on the location of the older person. This is a free service that is particularly valuable for family members needing to locate assistance for the care of an older parent or relative in another part of the country.

Eldercare Locator's toll-free number, 1-800-677-1116, is currently available weekdays from 9a.m. to 7p.m. (EST) from all states covered by the Heart of America Consortium, with the exception of Arizona, California, Washington, and Wyoming. These states are scheduled to be on-line by January 1993. Remember, the information is available *now* for all states; however, until January, not all states have access to the 800 number.

TSP OPEN SEASON

The next Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Open Season will begin November 15, 1992, and end January 31, 1993. During this open season, you may begin contributing to the TSP, change the amount of your TSP contributions, or allocate TSP contributions to your account among the following three investment funds:

1. Government Securities Investment (G) Fund
2. Common Stock Index (C) Fund
3. Fixed Income Index Investment (F) Fund

The TSP applies to employees covered by either the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) or the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). However, there are significant differences depending on the retirement system under which you are covered.

FERS

FERS employees may contribute up to 10 percent of their basic pay each pay period. In addition, FERS employees are eligible to receive Agency Automatic (1 percent) contributions and may be eligible to receive agency matching contributions.

CSRS

CSRS employees may only contribute up to 5 percent of their basic pay each pay period. CSRS employees do not receive any agency contributions.

If you would like to make an open season election, submit a completed Election Form, TSP-1 (2/91 or 9/90 version), to the Division of Personnel, Branch of Labor & Employee Relations. These forms are available from the Division of Personnel.

If you have any questions about the TSP, contact Siobhan Gibson, Employee Relations Specialist, at (303) 236-6701.

HEALTH BENEFITS AFTER RETIREMENT AREN'T ALWAYS GUARANTEED—BE SURE YOU'RE COVERED

Reprinted from Wyoming Horizons

BLM has grown increasingly concerned about employees who retire expecting to continue their coverage under the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program as retirees, but lose the coverage because they do not meet the participation requirement. The unexpected loss of health insurance at retirement affects not only the employees, but their family members as well.

Under the FEHB law, retiring employees must have participated in the FEHB Program for the 5 years of service immediately before retirement (or for all of their service during which they were eligible for FEHB coverage, if less than 5 years) in order to continue their coverage as retirees. Many employees have had FEHB during most of their career, but choose to have health insurance through other sources for a short time during their last few years of service. Some do not realize that they need 5 years of coverage before retirement, so do not enroll in FEHB soon enough to continue as retirees. Others enroll in FEHB 5 years before they plan to retire, but find themselves unexpectedly retiring early because of disability, reduction in force, or voluntary early retirement.

In many cases, employees have chosen non-FEHB coverage (for example, coverage under a spouse's non-Federal group insurance or coverage under a plan sponsored by their own employing agency rather than FEHB) because it costs them less than FEHB coverage and, as a result, have lost their opportunity to have FEHB coverage when they retire. Later, when they lose the non-FEHB coverage, they find that it can be extremely difficult to find adequate health insurance coverage at any price and that less-than-adequate coverage may be prohibitively expensive.

OPM has limited authority to waive the participation requirement. The FEHB law allows OPM to grant waivers of the participation requirement when "due to exceptional circumstances," we determine that it would be against equity and good conscience not to allow an annuitant to be enrolled in FEHB.

The following examples illustrate circumstances under which OPM would or would not approve a waiver request.

Examples of circumstances in which OPM could approve a waiver request include:

1. An employee drops coverage in the FEHB Program for a period of time, but re-enrolls later. The employee subsequently is forced to retire because of a disability before meeting the 5-year participation requirement.

2. An employee who does not meet the participation requirement, but who had been covered under FEHB for a substantial number of years during his or her career, including 3 years immediately before retirement, is forced to retire because of an involuntary separation.

3. An employee was enrolled in the FEHB Program at the first opportunity, remained enrolled for a substantial period of time, and was continuously enrolled for at least 4 out of the 5 years immediately preceding voluntary retirement.

4. An employee had a break in coverage during the 5 years of service immediately before retirement because his or her federally employed spouse changed from a family enrollment to a self only enrollment without informing the employee. The employee enrolled at the first opportunity after learning of the loss.

Examples of circumstances in which OPM would not approve a waiver request include:

1. An employee loses non-Federal coverage, enrolls for FEHB at the earliest opportunity thereafter, and then retires voluntarily before meeting the participation requirement.

2. An employee did not meet the 5-year participation requirement.

3. An employee who does not meet the 5-year participation requirement retires under an early optional retirement authority.

4. An employee claims to he unaware of the 5-year participation requirement.

For more information, contact your Personnel office.

HEALTH BENEFITS OPEN SEASON

The annual open season for Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) is scheduled for November 9 through December 14, 1992. During this period, eligible employees may enroll or change enrollments in their health plan. All elections and changes will be effective January 10, 1993.

If you would like to make a change, registration forms (SF-2809) and Enrollment Guide and Plan Comparison Charts for 1993 are available in the Division of Personnel. The Enrollment Guide and Plan Comparison Charts highlight the major features and costs of each plan. This guide will help you identify the plan which best suits your personal needs.

For further information, please contact Siobhan Gibson (303) 236-6701. For hearing or speech impaired, contact TDD (303) 236-7415.

CFC Drive Concludes

This year's Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) drive has thus far raised over $33,500. While this falls short of the SC's 1992 goal of $35,000, it nonetheless exceeds last year's record-breaking level of giving by almost $300. And there's still time to make a contribution, even though the SC's 1992 drive has officially concluded.

Many people worked hard on this year's campaign. Bob Gordon and William Moody, CFC Chair and Co-Chair respectively, organized the overall campaign and kept it running smoothly. Barb Guest coordinated the details involved in putting together the CFC auction, which again featured the auctioneering talents of Ray Boyd and several guest auctioneers. The bake-off and sale were administered by Theresa Fresquez and Margaret Trujillo. Finally, Mary Beth Stulz served as Community Fair Representative and Shae Martinez helped collect and total the contributions.

Numerous other individuals helped by serving as keyworkers for each Division/Staff, helping out behind the scenes for the auction and bake sale, and handling publicity and posters for the campaign.

Jason Swegle (SC-671C) is presented with an eagle statue for his contributions to CFC.

One highlight of the SC campaign this year was a 16-year-old high school co-op employee who donated the equivalent of 4 hour's pay per month to CFC. Jason Swegle, of the Remote Sensing Section (SC-671C), was honored by Associate Service Center Director Don Sweep with a CFC bronze-tone eagle statue to recognize his exceptional level of giving. Jason attends both WarrenTech and McLain Community High School and hopes to attend Red Rocks or Metro next year, majoring in computer science.

Thanks to everyone for helping to make this year's campaign a success!

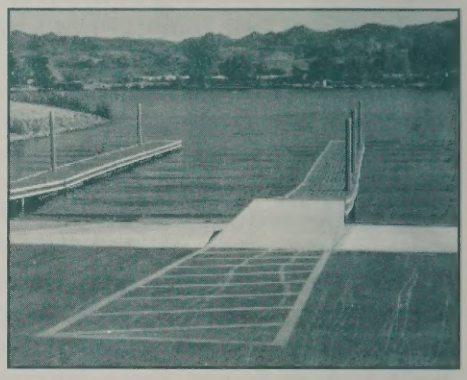
ROCK HOUSE FACILITY LAUNCHED

Rock House
LAUNCHING FACILITY
FUNDED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF BOATING AND WATERWAYS
OPERATED AND MAINTAINED BY THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

The Rock House boat launching facility located on the Colorado River north of Parker, Arizona was opened to the public on Labor Day weekend. This was the second boat launch facility along the river designed by the Branch of Building Engineering (SC-673) for the Yuma District Office. Both facilities were constructed with funds provided by the State of California.

Rock House is the only public facility in this area and features a four-lane boat launch with approximately 85,000 square feet of parking. "Future plans include the construction of the water treatment plant and a restroom building," said Del Garduno, lead mechanical engineer for the design team, "and will greatly increase the usefulness of the facility." The facility was designed to meet the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards. The challenge was to make the ramp area as accessible as possible to persons with disabilities and stay within engineering design guidelines.

The Parker Strip area is a popular and dynamic year-round recreational and boating area that attracts a variety of people from California and Arizona. It is less than



1-day's drive from the four major metropolitan areas of San Diego, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and Phoenix. Visitor use exceeds that of the Grand Canyon due to the fact that the area offers a wide variety of activities.

PERSONNEL NEWS

New Employees:

Tom Adler, Supv. Accountant, SC-616
Martha Coffey, Procurement Clerk, SC-651
Susan Goodman, Fire Mgt. Specialist, SC-214
Paul Graves, Cartographer, SC-671
Shannon Wondra, Contract Specialist, SC-652

Separations:

Irene Clapp, Supv. Contract Specialist, SC-651
Gloria Everett, Computer Assistant, SC-343
Gertrude Moore, Realty Specialist, SC-651